

TENNESSEE

**OPEN PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS  
(OPSP)**

***Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants***

***Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) Grants***

***Natural Resources Trust Fund (NRTF) Grants***

***Introduction***

The primary goal of the rating system is to objectively select the projects that should be funded. The rating criteria attempts to provide applicants and the state rating staff a fair and equitable project evaluation system. *Read each factor carefully and respond directly to its intent.*

Rating factors cannot be worded in a way that will address every possible situation. ***Intent statements have been developed to provide guidance in the awarding of the rating points.*** Points will be awarded on a variable scale depending on the degree to which the project satisfies the intent of the factor. The rating staff's priority list will be presented to the Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture (TDOA), the Executive Director of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) and/or National Park Service (NPS) for approval.

\_\_\_\_\_ *If the need for a conversion has been identified and the grant applicant has not initiated the conversion process, then a new grant application will not be considered.*

**General Criteria (150 points maximum)**

All applicant projects will be rated in the following categories:

- 1. Planning Process (30 points maximum)
- 2. Environmental Considerations (30 points maximum)
- 3. Maintenance (30 points maximum)
- 4. Administrative Compliance (30 points maximum)
- 5. Delivery System (30 points maximum)

**Additional Categories (30 points maximum)**

Projects will be rated in one or more of the following categories:

- 1. Development Criteria For General Recreation
- 2. Acquisition - Heritage Resources
- 3. Acquisition - Recreation Resources
- 4. Greenways, Trails, and Natural Areas Development

All of the above can be rated, but only the one with the highest scoring category will be considered. If all have the same score, only one score will be used.

**Bonus Categories**

[Bonus categories and points will be reviewed and added, when appropriate, through proposals by RES/TDEC, Action Program from the State Recreation Plan and the Governor's recreation/outdoor initiatives.]

<b><i>Maximum Possible Grant Rating – 180 points</i></b>
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## ***GENERAL CRITERIA***

*(Total points available for this section –150)*

### **1. PLANNING PROCESS (30 points maximum)**

This section measures the quality of the procedure(s) utilized by the applicant to identify its public recreation needs. Factors considered in evaluating this process include citizen involvement, local commitment, prioritization of needs, and documentation and conformance with state and local plans. The proposed project should conform to plans prepared within the last five years.

#### ***A. Citizen Participation/Local Commitment***

##### **1. Budget Planning Documentation**

Is the proposed project, in whole or in part, identified in your general fund and/or capital improvement plan or annual budget for:

- a) Current or next fiscal year?
- b) The next two fiscal years?
- c) The next three fiscal years?

[Budget documentation should also include the capital improvement plan or general budget showing the proposed match.]

##### **2. Show the methods used for involving a cross section of citizens -- including youth, senior adults, minorities, persons with disabilities, etc. in the planning of the proposed project. This information should be the most current available, normally within the last two years. The following are aspects of public input:**

- a) Board meeting approved minutes (including park and recreation board, city/county commissions, school boards, etc.) supporting the proposed project
- b) Notice of public hearings and hearing minutes
- c) Evidence of media support and involvement
- d) Sample and analysis of community surveys measuring public need and support of the proposed project
- e) Report generated by professional strategic planning workshop

- f) Other examples of forums utilized for public input (**not petitions**). Include documentation of as many of these aspects of public input as possible.
3. Demonstrate and show examples of local support for the proposed project. Show support for the following by providing specific documentation:
    - a) Donations of money
    - b) Donations of land by a third party
    - c) Donations of labor
    - d) Donations of materials
    - e) Established partnerships
    - f) Copy of applicant's general fund budget sheets for parks and recreation
    - g) Capital improvement fund

**B. *Local and State Priority***

Documentation should be initiated and prepared by the applicant. Goals and objectives should be included in the application documentation.

1. Project meets a generalized goal or objective as identified in (document all that apply):
  - a) the current five-year local recreation plan
  - b) a report generated by a strategic planning workshop
  - c) the summarization of a public survey of opinion regarding said project
2. Applicant has completed a current inventory of existing facilities and has prepared a detailed assessment of each park facility's deficiencies, maintenance and safety needs, accessibility compliance, and proposed improvements for the entire park system. Applicant answers the question, "Does the project enhance the unmet recreation needs/opportunities?" The proposed project should meet a priority need in the five-year current local recreation plan. \*The inventory and assessment must be submitted in the application. (If this is a joint application with other government entities, include the inventory and assessment of each.)

*\* Exhibit 7 - Area and Facility Inventory form .*

3. Conformance with the State Recreation Plan

In order to promote the provision of recreation opportunities through the management, protection and preservation of Tennessee's natural, cultural and environmental resources, this project meets regional and state priorities of the *Tennessee State Recreation Plan*. All local governments should have a copy of the current plan. It can also be viewed and downloaded from [www.state.tn.us/environment/recreation](http://www.state.tn.us/environment/recreation).

2. **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS (30 points maximum)**

**[Note: it is important that environmental information and permits received relevant to proposed project be included with the application.]**

A. *Access and Zoning*

(Include supporting documentation in the application)

The project provides:

1. Convenient public access
2. Surrounding land uses that compliment the recreation site
3. Surrounding lands that are zoned to protect project site from future incompatible development
4. A site that is environmentally suitable for proposed project

B. Environmental Clearance Letters

**Environmental Clearance Letters**

	<b>Grantee has sent letter to this Agency</b>	<b>Clearance given</b>	<b>Problem Noted by Agency</b>
<b>Division of Archaeology</b>			
<b>Division of Natural Heritage</b>			
<b>Tennessee Historical Commission</b>			
<b>U.S. Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</b>			
<b>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</b>			

C. Environmental Preservation/Protection

1. Complete the attached environmental survey to sufficiently describe the positive and negative effects on the environmental elements of the proposed project(s). Please include any additional supporting documentation with the survey.

## **List of Agencies**

For more information about using native plants, safety, building codes, underground storage tanks, etc., that concern your project, contact:

**Division of Archaeology**  
**5103 Edmondson Pike**  
**Nashville, TN 37211-5129**  
**Contact: Nick Fielder**  
**(615) 741-1588**

**Division of Natural Heritage**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Floor, L & C Tower**  
**401 Church Street**  
**Nashville, TN 37243-0447**  
**Contact: Roger McCoy**  
**(615) 532-0431**

**Tennessee Exotic Pest Control Council**  
**P.O. Box 40692**  
**Nashville, TN 37204**  
**615-646-5292**

**Southern Building Codes**  
**900 Montclair Road**  
**Birmingham, Alabama 35213**  
**1-800-877-2224**

**Life Safety Codes**  
**National Fire Protection Association**  
**617-770-3000, or, 1-800-344-3555**

**Handicapped Code**  
**Public Building Accessibility Act**  
**North Carolina Handicapped Code (TN adopted this)**  
**919-733-3901**

**Underground Storage Tanks  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, L & C Tower  
401 Church Street  
Nashville, TN 37243-1541  
615-532-0945**

**Division of Superfund  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, L & C Tower  
401 Church Street  
Nashville, TN 37243-1538  
615-532-0900**

TDEC's permit website address is:

<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/permits/whoami.htm>

This provides a list of permits required for specific development projects. Applicants should refer to this site when trying to determine if their proposed project will require a STATE environmental permit. **Note:** Federal and local permits may also be required. This site also provides information on how to apply for a permit.



## ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The potential environmental impact of proposed construction and rehabilitation is a serious concern. This grant-aid program requires that all recipients of funding comply with the conditions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) prior to and during construction activities.

Letters of clearance or compliance with Federal environmental laws must be obtained by the project applicant for each project and submitted with the project application by the application deadline. Letters must be obtained from each of the following three agencies:

### **TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

ATTN: Mr. Herb Harper  
Clover Bottom Mansion  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, TN 37243-0442  
615/532-1559

### **U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE**

ATTN: Dr. Lee Barclay  
446 Neal Street  
Cookeville, TN 38501  
931-528-6481

### FOR MIDDLE & EAST TENNESSEE:

#### **U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

ATTN: Mr. Ron Gatlin  
Regulatory Branch  
PO Box 1070  
Nashville, TN 37202  
615/736-5181

### For West Tennessee:

#### **U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

ATTN: Larry Watson  
Regulatory Function Branch  
167 N. Main St, B-202  
Memphis, TN 38103  
901/544-0736

#### **In addition, for LPRF Grants:**

Division of Archaeology  
5103 Edmondson Pike  
Nashville, TN 37211-5129  
Contact: Nick Fielder  
(615) 741-1588

#### **In addition, for LPRF Grants:**

Division of Natural Heritage  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, L & C Tower  
401 Church Street  
Nashville, TN 37243-0447  
Contact: Roger McCoy  
(615) 532-0431

In addition, a copy of a topographic quad map(s) clearly indicating the entire proposed route of the trail project or park boundary must be submitted with the application. If photocopied, be sure that the name/title of the quad map(s) is indicated.

If the proposed project in any way affects a watercourse, its 100-year floodplain or any lake, pond, reservoir, swamp, marsh, or wetland, the project applicant must secure a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (listed above). A state Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (ARAP) from the Division of Water Pollution Control may also be required. For information on state permit requirements, contact the Department of Environment and Conservation at 1-888-891-TDEC.

It is the applicant's responsibility to secure any required environmental and/or construction permits (local, state or federal) prior to project construction. Separate documentation must be provided for EACH individual project site.

The new TDEC permit website address is: <http://www.state.tn.us/environment/permits/whoami.htm> This provides a list of permits required for specific development projects. Applicants should refer to this site when trying to

determine if their proposed project will require an environmental STATE permit. **Note: Federal and local permits may also be required. This site also provides information on how to apply for a permit.**

Federal agencies only (U.S.F.S., TVA, NPS, and COE) may use a current Environmental Impact Statement.

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY</b>
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This survey is a requirement for recreation grant programs. Where adverse or negative impact is indicated, additional information describing how this adverse or negative impact will be mitigated must be submitted. For projects selected for funding and submitted to NPS, the Department of Environment and Conservation will verify the accuracy of this information and compliance with appropriate state and federal regulatory agencies to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). **Failure to provide complete and accurate information may result in rejection of the project.**

1. Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Land Use:

a) Please provide a detailed description of how the project will be constructed, the design of the project, special features including any bridges, and proximity to environmental features (stream crossings, wetlands, forested areas, open field, etc.). Describe in detail the project area including topography, historic land usages, and unique geologic features. Attach a land use map of the area if available, and one USGS topographic map, with topographic map name, with legend, clearly showing project location and boundaries. The documents should be of sufficient size and clarity for adequate interpretation of applicant's intentions.

b) Is the project consistent with comprehensive land use, management or development plans for the area?      **Yes**      **No**      **Not Sure**

Name of plan: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Natural Resources: Describe how the proposed project will impact the following?

- a) Soil Erosion or Sedimentation;
- b) Vegetation (i.e., noxious weeds, etc.);
- c) Streams, Rivers or Lakes;
- d) Wetlands;
- e) Floodplains;
- f) Farmlands;
- g) National Natural Landmarks;
- h) Endangered Plants and/or Animals; and,
- i) Wildlife and/or Wildlife Habitat.

4. The project application:

- a) Identifies, lists and incorporated only native plants into the proposed project; and/or,

- b) Promotes and documents, with a listing of the native plants that will be used; and/or
- c) If non-native plants are used, it must be minimal and their use must be sufficiently justified.

5. Historic and Archaeological Resources:

a) Has the project been reviewed by the Tennessee Historic Commission?  
       \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**                      If yes, attach Commission comments

b) Will the project have an effect on historic or archaeological resources?  
       \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**                      \_\_\_ **Not Sure**

6. Hazardous Wastes – Is there any potential for involvement with hazardous wastes or underground storage tanks?     \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**                      \_\_\_ **Not Sure**

7. Noise – Is there potential for the project to have a noise impact on the surrounding land uses?  
       \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**

8. Air Quality – Will the project have an adverse impact on air quality?  
       \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**                      If yes, explain.

9. Is the project located on a publicly owned park, recreation area, historic site or wildlife and waterfowl refuge?     \_\_\_ **Yes**                      \_\_\_ **No**

If yes, mark the appropriate box and name the facility.

\_\_\_ Park or \_\_\_ Recreation Area \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_ Historic Site \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_ Wildlife/Waterfowl Refuge \_\_\_\_\_

10. Permits Required:

Section 404 Permit - Wetland (Corps of Engineers)	___ <b>Yes</b>	___ <b>No</b>
Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (TDEC)	___ <b>Yes</b>	___ <b>No</b>
Tennessee Valley Authority Section 26a Permit	___ <b>Yes</b>	___ <b>No</b>
Local Permits	___ <b>Yes</b>	___ <b>No</b>

11. Describe methods to be employed to reduce adverse impacts from construction or use, such as noise, dust generation, soil erosion and siltation.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT APPLICANT**

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Any response that signifies impacts (significant or minimum) may require additional information. On additional pages provide information, as necessary, to access the potential impacts. Attach additional documentation if applicable.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Preparer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Preparer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Signature, usually Mayors or Agency Director if State or Federal Application)

**3. MAINTENANCE (30 points maximum)**

In distributing limited state funding to local governments, the state pays special attention to those communities who comply with federal and state regulations and who demonstrate the ability to effectively maintain a recreation and parks system. This includes overall maintenance capabilities -- by showing a developed, comprehensive maintenance plan; current maintenance staff for parks and facilities; maintenance funds dedicated for parks and facilities; playgrounds and aquatic facilities that meet or exceed state and/or national standards; other park facilities meet recommended safety and risk management standards; proper turf management practices are utilized; and proper signage that includes information for emergency contacts. **Be as specific as possible with your documentation and attachments.**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM COMPLIANCE (30 points maximum)**

**The RES review team may request supplemental information in this area – from applicants with some or all of these problems.**

- Any grant applicant that has unresolved compliance/maintenance issues, as found during an on-site inspection
- Previously identified change of use/obsolete facility situations
- Undeveloped acquisitions from previous grants where development was identified to take place;
- Temporary and permanent signage as required by contract at park site is not displayed;
- Incomplete past grants, non-fulfillment of contracts
- Major accessibility problems
- The project location serves all populations of the community and is equally accessible to all

## **5. DELIVERY SYSTEM (30 points maximum)**

This section addresses the quantity and quality of recreation services delivered to the public and rates the applicant's use of community resources for recreation and parks. You may not have a comprehensive organized delivery system but you can still score points by documenting what you do have in place.

*Application should include sufficient documentation concerning all of the above. All resolutions/ordinances/charters and by-laws should be properly dated and signed by local government authorities, or director of the state agency. Any undated/unsigned documents will receive zero or partial credit only.*

### **A. Organization and Administration**

1. A legally constituted Recreation and Parks advisory or policy board exists (in accordance with TCA 11-24 and TCA 11-21). Include the following documentation as part of your application:
  - a) a resolution, ordinance or charter
  - b) written by-laws
  - c) Your current list of board members (your board must reflect an equal representation of the populations existing within the community)
2. Tell us how parks and recreation services/programs are organized and delivered in your community. Documentation should include organizational

charts, current job descriptions of all full-time, part-time employees, and a list of volunteer positions and/or volunteer organizations, flyers and brochures of current programs, contracts, and agreements, etc.

**B. *Use of Existing Resources and Unique Opportunities***

1. How are you utilizing other facilities/resources within the community? Examples may include, but are not limited to: [documentation should include all the facilities that are used]
  - a. Schools
  - b. Businesses (including churches, banks, etc.)
  - c. City/county facilities
  - d. Private non-profit staff and volunteers
  - e. Other
  
2. How are you using written contracts/agreements for cooperative efforts with other recreation providers and/or other governmental entities? Documentation should include written contracts with as many different providers as possible, including, but not limited to:
  - a) Private recreation providers (including health and fitness centers, organizations, clubs, etc.)
  - b) Businesses (including industries, non-profits, churches, etc.)
  - c) Athletic leagues/associations
  - d) Boards of Education
  - e) City/county governments (including public works, police department, sheriff's office, Arts Commission, etc.)
  - f) State or federal agencies (including state parks, TWRA, TVA, Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, etc.)

**C. *Program Services Offered***

1. How are you providing a comprehensive program for all citizens? Please consider scope and balance, and provide sufficient examples including: various program/event flyers, news articles, etc.)

**Scope** in programming refers to providing activities for the following population types:

- a) All age groups;
- b) All genders;
- c) All ethnic groups;
- d) All socio-economic-levels; and,
- e) Various levels of programming designed for the physically and mentally challenged.

**Balance** in programming refers to providing a varied assortment of activities in the following areas:

- a. Athletics
- b. Fitness
- c. Cultural arts
- d. Outdoor activities (including natural, interpretive and environmental)
- e. Educational
- f. Hobbies/clubs
- g. Social/new trends
- h. Arts and crafts
- i. Special events
- j. Other activities
- k. Environmental education activities



## ***ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES***

### **1. DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA FOR GENERAL RECREATION**

#### **Point distribution (30 points possible)**

- a. Multiple use--project meets priority need or needs and offers variety of recreation activities to a wide range of users.
- b. The project location serves all populations of the community and is equally accessible to all. Application documentation should include narrative, maps concerning project location and service area. It should also include community populations/primary participants/users
- c. The project renovates or revitalizes park facilities, which are at least 20 years old. Support documentation must be included identifying when facility was developed/constructed. Points will not be awarded if the project is needed due to an obvious lack of maintenance.
- d. Application documentation should include: plans, maps, and drawings on how facilities are sited, designed and constructed to fit the landscape/park area. The project will develop recreation lands/facilities that are compatible with a site's natural resources and that minimize adverse environmental impacts. Ratings will be based upon the validity of the project design.
- e. A project whose main purpose is to protect and preserve natural and/or cultural features and also provides opportunities for environmental education
- f. Vandal-resistant, innovative or unique design/construction features are incorporated into the project. These features must be identified/described by applicant.
- g. Specific documentation showing how acquisition/development costs were attained are submitted in the application. For example, a grant application for swimming pool development should document whether or not the estimates of the proposed costs were provided by professionals/experts.

## 2. **ACQUISITION - HERITAGE RESOURCES (30 points possible)**

- A. Primary significance of acquisition (mark all that apply).
1. **BIO-DIVERSITY:** Acquisition will promote and protect bio-diversity (e.g. presence of threatened or endangered species, critical or sub-critical natural communities, species richness or use as wildlife corridor). Potential opportunities exist for education, research and recreation activities.
  2. **GEOLOGICAL:** The acquisition has unique or important geologic features. Potential opportunities exist for education, research and recreation activities.
  3. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL:** The acquisition has archaeological significance. Potential opportunities exist for education, research and recreation activities.
  4. **HISTORICAL:** The acquisition preserves the integrity of a historical site (either on or eligible for listing with the National Register of Historic Places). Potential opportunities exist for education, research and recreation activities.
- B. Applicant has conducted and inventoried applicable heritage resources.
- C. The acquisition is for preservation purposes (historical, archaeological, natural, cultural, scenic, or other special features) and has been verified by the appropriate state agencies.

## 3. **ACQUISITION - RECREATION RESOURCES (30 points possible)**

Items that should be addressed include:

- A. The project justifies the need for more land for recreation, parkland, natural area, or open space purposes.
- B. The acquisition enhances natural areas, greenways, and open space corridors.
- C. Acquisition will protect potential recreation sites and/or parkland from future undesirable development.
- D. The acreage is of sufficient size and configuration to adequately accommodate its intended recreation usage and development.
- E. How does this acquisition make connections to other parks, greenways, trails, neighborhoods, schools, etc? Local or regional land use plans or land acquisition plans need to reflect the movement towards a seamless park system with corridors and linkages to local, state, and federal parks.
- F. What are your plans for development?

**4. GREENWAYS & TRAILS DEVELOPMENT and/or NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION (30 points possible)**

If the applicant wants to be scored for these criteria, a minimum of 50% of the project cost must be for greenway or trail development, and/or natural area preservation.

Items that should be addressed in your narrative include:

- A. The trail, natural area, or greenway provides linkage to other established recreation areas, trails and facilities; e.g. schools, downtown businesses, and/or other communities.
- B. The trail, natural area, or greenway will make use of linear corridors such as rail-line, waterways, and utility rights-of-way where legally feasible.
- C. Applicant exhibits a partnership of organizational sharing of financial costs.
- D. Applicant's project provides environmental education, research opportunities and/or interpretative recreation opportunities.
- E. Development enhances heritage resources, i.e. promotion of bio-diversity, use of native plants, and conservation of archaeological or historical sites.
- F. How does this project comply with the State Greenways and Trails Plan?

## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>ADA-</b> Americans with Disability Act	<b>TEA-21-</b> Transportation Equity Act of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
<b>APRP</b> – Associate Park & Recreation Professional	<b>TVA-</b> Tennessee Valley Authority
<b>ASTM-</b> American Society for Testing and Materials	<b>TWRA-</b> Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
<b>CN-</b> Certified Number	<b>USGS-</b> United States Geological Service
<b>CPRP</b> – Certified Parks & Recreation Professional	
<b>CPSC-</b> Consumer Product Safety Commission	
<b>CST-</b> Central Standard Time	
<b>DBE</b> – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	
<b>FAQ-</b> Frequently Asked Questions	
<b>FHwA-</b> Federal Highway Administration	
<b>LPRF-</b> Local Parks and Recreation Fund	
<b>LWCF-</b> Land and Water Conservation Fund	
<b>NLU</b> – Notice of Limitation of Use	
<b>NPS-</b> National Park Service	
<b>NRTF-</b> Natural Resources Trust Fund	
<b>OGC</b> – Office of General Counsel	
<b>OPSP-</b> Open Project Selection Process	
<b>PARTAS</b> – Parks and Recreation Technical Advisory Service	
<b>REC</b> – Recreation Educational Consultant	
<b>RES-</b> Recreation Educational Services Division	
<b>RTP</b> – Recreation Trails Program	
<b>TCA-</b> Tennessee Code Annotated	
<b>TDEC-</b> Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation	
<b>TDOA-</b> Tennessee Department of Agriculture	

# Exhibits

## Exhibit 1

## Exhibit 2

### Exhibit 3



## Exhibit 4

## Exhibit 5

## Exhibit 6

## Area and Facility Inventory

Facility Category	Number	Condition
<b>Example:</b>		
<b>PARKS</b>		
Neighborhood	3	Excellent
Charles Park		Inspected reg.
Randolph Park		Needs new parking
lot		
Lacey Park		Playground Insp.
Community	1	Good
Regional	0	N/A

### Outdoor Recreation Areas

#### Pocket Parks

#### State/Federal Parks

#### Golf Courses

#### Natural Areas

#### Aquatic Areas

#### Recreation Centers

#### Court Areas

#### Field Areas

#### Running/Walking Track

#### Equestrian facilities

#### In-line skating

#### Extreme sports park

#### Zoos

#### Amusement Parks

#### Fair grounds

#### Racing Facilities

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